

Reproduction of a Printed Report originally submitted
to the Bucks County Council in the year 1892

CONTAINING

LETTERS FROM MISS
FLORENCE NIGHTINGALE
ON
HEALTH VISITING IN
RURAL DISTRICTS

LONDON

P. S. KING & SON

ORCHARD HOUSE, WESTMINSTER

1911

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PREFATORY NOTE.

I HAVE been asked to write a few words of introduction to this pamphlet because I had the honour and pleasure of knowing Miss Nightingale personally, and I have agreed to do so, thinking that I may be able to put forward some aspects of her work which are not known to all. It is quite unnecessary to dilate upon the glorious work which she accomplished during the Crimean War in nursing the wounded and caring for the sick, because many who have entirely forgotten the names of the generals in command of our troops, and to whom even the names Redan and Balaclava have little meaning, are perfectly aware that Miss Nightingale during the war not only relieved the sufferings of our wounded soldiers, but gave an example which, though it cannot abolish the horrors of war, has, at any rate, done something to lessen them. I think it was a matter for universal rejoicing, not only in this country, but over the whole world, that Miss Nightingale's work was acknowledged by the bestowal upon her of the Order of Merit, for surely no one ever deserved it better. As I have already said, every one knows what benefits she conferred upon mankind

by bringing to the sick and wounded in warfare the lessening of pain and the increase of comfort which the ministrations of trained nurses can afford. But there are many who do not know that her work in the Crimea, great though it was, is probably a good deal less than what she effected since. After the war was over, Miss Nightingale, exhausted in mind and body by the tremendous strain she had undergone, never regained the health which she devoted to her country's cause. And yet from her couch this woman of loving heart and gracious presence originated and developed with marvellous organising power a system of sick nursing which has lessened the pains and smoothed the weariness of millions of sufferers, and has even robbed deathbeds of much of their terror. But with the clearness of intellect, which was one of her distinguishing qualities, she recognised that prevention is better than cure, and that the instruction of mothers was one of the best means of preventing disease. As she herself said, in her lecture to mothers, when a child has lost its health how often the mother says, "Oh! if I had only known, but there was no one to tell me." This sad want of knowledge Miss Nightingale thought could probably be best removed by instituting Health Visitors throughout the country who could visit the homes and give the mothers the instruction they needed to prevent the death of their children or their disablement by disease. But her remark is very true, "there are more people to pick us up when we fall than to enable us to stand upon our feet." It is comparatively easy to

get money for Cripples' Homes, Hospitals, and Convalescent Homes, where one can see definite results for the money expended; but it is very hard to get money which will prevent the children from dying of consumption or living as cripples. Yet, if all mothers throughout the country possessed a little more knowledge of the causes of disease and the means of avoiding them, many children who are either cut off prematurely or, maimed and broken, live on a stunted life, might have been healthy, hearty, and happy men and women. The object of the National League for Physical Education and Improvement which has been established is the same as that which Miss Florence Nightingale had so much at heart—namely, that boys and girls should grow up strong and healthy in body and mind. The institution of Health Visitors is one of the most powerful agencies for attaining this object, and the present pamphlet will help greatly to aid the movement.

LAUDER BRUNTON

*(Vice-Chairman of the National League for
Physical Education and Improvement).*

PREFACE

SINCE the death of Miss Florence Nightingale expression has been given to a desire, unanimous and universal, to raise to her memory some monument worthy of her life's work. There is only one way in which she herself would have wished, and those who knew her best now wish, that her memory should be perpetuated—namely, by continuing and extending that work. It may be divided into two sections—

1. Nursing the sick.
2. Preventing sickness.

The whole civilised world associates her name with nursing, and rightly, for her work as a nurse was a new creation, inspired by intense human sympathy and illumined by knowledge and experience which she had, with the help of an indomitable will, and in spite of immense difficulties, given the earlier and all the best years of her life to acquire. But it was only a few who had the opportunity of knowing the strength of her convictions regarding the prevention of disease, and the criminal folly of anything short of active and sustained resistance against all forms of preventable illness.

No one felt more keenly than Miss Nightingale the fearful risk—specially to child life—of ignorance and neglect of the elementary rules of health, bringing in the inevitable harvest of misery and poverty to the homes of the people. The strange thing is, and she often spoke of the strangeness of it, that the cure of disease is far more popular than its prevention. Out of a hundred people ready to subscribe towards nurses, only a mere fraction would give towards Health Visitors. One reason is that in prevention there is nothing to show. Its beneficence is invisible, but the prevention of disease is at least as important as its cure, and is infinitely more economical.

From the pounds, shillings and pence point of view death—specially sudden death—is far cheaper than long illness. No work is so “unproductive” as illness which can be prevented, no extravagance so unpardonable in a civilised community, no “civilisation” so uncivilised as that which looks on while every law of health is being broken, and then is compelled to pay for doctors and nurses in countless cases where they ought never to have been wanted at all.

A minute percentage of the money and the misery exacted for breaking the elementary laws of health would be sufficient for their observance. But here, as in so many other cases, latent extravagance is often far more popular than patent expenditure.

Miss Nightingale watched with deep sympathy and with a continuing interest the pioneer movement of health visitors inaugurated in

Manchester and other great provincial towns, and she knew country life well enough to be convinced that it was not only in towns that they were wanted.

In the last twenty years a great advance has been made in promoting the Health Visitors movement both in towns and in the country, and those who desire to see for themselves where Health Visitors are now at work and what they are doing will find an interesting summary in a pamphlet called "The Health Visitor" (price one penny), published by the National League for Physical Education and Improvement, 4, Tavistock Square, W.C.

It is in the hope that this movement, in all its effective forms, may be stimulated and continued in wider application, in larger measure, and as an essential part of the ordered progress of local self-government, that the following pamphlet, printed first some twenty years ago, is reproduced.

FREDERICK W. VERNEY.

January, 1911.

INTRODUCTION

WRITTEN IN 1892

FOR some years past the big sanitary drum has been beaten loud and long, an instrument of which the public are inclined to think that a little goes a long way. We have had National, International, and Provincial Health Congresses. We have watched professors and sanitary engineers devising and carrying out grand schemes to take millions of tons of sewage from one place to another, at a cost of millions of pounds sterling, and we have wandered through miles of Health Exhibitions, full of exhibits, which run through the whole gamut, from the highly interesting to the intensely nasty.

Now all this is, no doubt, quite as it must be, even though all is not quite as it should be. Enormous towns have enormous claims "upon their backs to bite 'em," and lesser towns have lesser claims, but not *ad infinitum*. And this is how this pamphlet comes to be written. A vast deal has been done in a big way for big towns, but very little for the country, which, after all, is bigger even than the towns, whichever way you look at it, either in area or in population. And, moreover, there is plenty of dirt and plenty of death to be found in the country, often much more of both, in proportion to population, than in the towns; and a great deal of this dirt and of this death is "preventable"—preventable, but not prevented.

Admit, if you wish it, that much of it can be prevented only by the expenditure of large sums of money, which represents the capitalised neglect of many generations, which one generation cannot possibly make good. Still, there is a great deal of dirt which may be cleansed, and of death which may be thwarted, by an expenditure of knowledge and of common sense so small, and of money so minute, that continued neglect on the part of those who are responsible is nothing less than criminal folly. We burn

with a righteous armchair indignation over the horrors of infanticide in foreign countries, and watch with absolute complacency the infanticide at our very doors. The mother who would die rather than put a glass of poisoned water within reach of her child, forces her whole family to swallow draughts of poisoned air night after night, in the hermetically sealed cupboard which does duty for a bedroom, while countless millions of measures of the purest air are waiting outside the window, even where the perverse ingenuity of those who live inside has succeeded in poisoning some of it by the accumulated filth of the pig-stye and the cesspool privy. But *de minimis non curant* the local or the domestic authorities. This pamphlet is an attempt to deal with these neglected "minima," and to show that a minimum is a maximum when human life is concerned, and that the human units in our villages are as worthy of our attention as the human millions in our cities.

The scheme of this pamphlet has nothing big to recommend it. It is an early record of an attempt, which is still in its infancy, to bring, by the simplest and most practical means, a knowledge of health to the homes of the country folk in our villages. For this, it is necessary for some one to have the knowledge, and to be willing and able to spread it. In sanitary matters, applied knowledge is life, applied ignorance is death. But every one is aware of the fact that knowledge, without sympathy to introduce and recommend it, is not available for distribution. The necessary stock-in-trade of any one who wants to be a "Health Visitor" is therefore some knowledge and much sympathy. It has been one of the objects of the Technical Education Committee for North Bucks to utilise some of the money at their disposal in equipping certain ladies, who were willing to devote themselves to the work, with the knowledge indispensable for "Health Visitors." It was intended that these ladies should make friends with the country people in their village homes, and make use of friendship for the purpose of distributing knowledge. A little knowledge is *not* a dangerous thing, if the person who has it knows how little it is, and knows that little accurately and well. The syllabus of the teaching which the North Bucks "Health Visitors" have received, and in which they have passed a satisfactory examination, is purposely and carefully restricted within certain well-defined limits—limits

which are, however, sufficiently wide to give enough to learn, and enough to teach, of "Health at Home," to bring about great reforms in many an English village. The "Health Visitor" has not the training of a nurse, and she does not pretend to be one, still less has she the knowledge of a doctor, and she does not attempt to do the doctor's work. But the "Health Visitors" in North Bucks have had the great advantage of learning from Dr. De'Ath of Buckingham, a Medical Officer of Health who has had many years' experience of a country doctor's life, and who knows the kind of health work that is wanted in country villages and the most practical way of carrying it out. Nothing less, and no other than, experience of this kind could qualify a man to prepare "Health Visitors" for village and country work, and he must have the active, living enthusiasm for the cause which Dr. De'Ath combines with his knowledge of the people, and his experience of their homes and surroundings. A town training would not give the same results. The difference between town and country has its counterpart in the difference between the appearance and the very character of those who live in the one or in the other. Even between parish and parish there are differences less marked, which "Health Visitors" will probably have to take into account.

Those who deal with public money in these days are rightly called on to show that good value is got by the public for what is spent. There is one point on which the public mind is often misled. Ratepayers often prefer the extravagance which they don't see to the expenditure which they do. In every department of Government, whether National or Provincial, latent extravagance is generally preferred to patent expenditure. Nothing is said if pounds are wasted imperceptibly, but the easy eloquence of a vicarious economy is indignant over the open expenditure of shillings. Why don't we realise the fact that economy does not consist in what we spend, or even in what we do not spend, but in what we get for our money? For instance, people will go on for years walking, riding, and driving along bad roads, wearing out shoe-leather, the feet of their horses, and the wheels of their carriages, rather than spend the far smaller amount required to put and keep the roads in perfect order. In the one case

the tax-collector has to put his hands openly into their pockets, and in the other their pockets are being secretly picked by their own neglect. The extravagance of illness and the economy of health may be proved to the satisfaction of any ratepayer, if he will but think out the problem for himself, and if he will not grudge the minute fraction of the cost of disease which we ask him to pay for its prevention. Wise men tell us that the lowest form of life is an animal that is all stomach. The lowest form of ratepayer seems to be an animal that is all purse, very tightly tied up at the neck.

One name appears in the following pages with which this attempt has from the very first been closely connected, a name round which there will always be, in the eyes of all who know it, a halo of work and love.

Miss Florence Nightingale has inspired us, advised us, guided us. Under her leadership we are going forwards, feeling our way step by step, in the confident belief that success will be won, and can only be won, by loyalty to the principles laid down for us by her.

FREDERICK W. VERNEY

*(Chairman of the North Bucks
Technical Education Committee).*

November, 1892.

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Confidential.

CLAYDON HOUSE,
WINSLOW, BUCKS.
October 17th, 1891.

MY DEAR MR. FREDERICK VERNEY,

It is scarcely needful to say to intelligent people that Health at the Home is one of the most important questions for any one charged with the duties of Local Government. But, while sanitation has actually become fashionable, while we are choked with the flood of sanitary books, pamphlets, publications, and lectures of all sorts, good, bad, and indifferent, we have remained a book and a pen.

We have not become a voice and a hand.

What is read in a book stays in the book.

Health in the Home has not been carried home to the hundreds of thousands of rural mothers and girls, upon whom so largely depends the health of the rural population.

In fact, they do not believe in sanitation as affecting health, as preventing disease.

There has been a melancholy instance near here.

At your special request I have been making assiduous enquiries for educated women trained in such a way that they could personally bring their knowledge home to the cottagers' wives on a mission of health for rural districts. For this they must be in touch and in love, so to speak, with the rural poor mothers and girls, and know how to show them better things without giving offence.

We have, though they are but a sprinkling in our great towns and in London, excellent town district nurses, but for many obvious reasons they would not be quite suitable for your

proposed work. We can find no one woman for this ready made. She must be created for a rural Health Visitor.

Knowing how deeply interested you were in this subject on its practical side, we have consulted a number of the most experienced people. And we have arrived at the conclusion that to make the movement a success, we must find some gentleman apt to teach, and educated women apt to learn—in other words, we must train them for the purpose. And we must not mix up nursing the sick with Health in the Home.

It does not appear in the least necessary to go outside this County. It seems far better to utilise the ability at hand for teaching, and the capacity for being taught.

With this object, I have made enquiry as to who there may be in North Bucks who would be willing to give time and trouble to teach, and who is qualified by knowledge and experience, and caring for this problem as it deserves.

I had already been much struck by a report of one of the North Bucks Medical Officers of Health—Dr. De'Ath. I made enquiries from independent sources. I have seen him, and have a good hope that he will prove himself to be as competent as he certainly is willing, from a high sense of duty, to undertake this work—the work, that is, of training those who are to teach practical domestic sanitation to the mothers and girls, and who will be qualified by a course of work, theoretical—that is, to give them the “reason why,” and practical, to show them how to do it, under Dr. De'Ath.

I know of no such school of health, now in existence, for teaching of this kind as would be started at Buckingham, if this project is carried out. And, if carried out successfully, Buckingham may become a centre of supply of trained Health Visitors—not for its own immediate neighbourhood only, but for many parts of England where such work is sorely needed.

It seems hardly necessary to contrast sick nursing with this. The needs of home health-bringing require different but not lower qualifications, and are more varied. They require tact and judgment unlimited to prevent the work being regarded as interference and becoming unpopular.

They require an intense and real belief in sanitation, and that life or death may lie in a grain of dust or a drop of water, or other such minutiae which are not minutiae but Goliaths—and the Health Visitor must be a David to slay them, and have his sweet voice, and must be trained as he was to fight the giants with the simple weapons of everyday use.

She must create a new work and a new profession for women, and she must make her work acceptable to women of the labouring class.

I trust that your County Council will not think me one of your interfering Health Visitors. I know your interest in inaugurating a vital work among the rural poor women.

And I have, therefore, done your behest with alacrity. May North Bucks distinguish itself by its wisdom and success in giving such an education to rural mothers, and in waging the war against national deterioration of health and vigour.

Pray believe me,

Dear Mr. Frederick Verney,

Your and the Mothers'

Anxious and attached Friend,

(Signed) FLORENCE NIGHTINGALE.

FREDERICK WILLIAM VERNEY, ESQ.

Syllabus of Lectures given to the Lady Lecturers.

TECHNICAL EDUCATION.

HEALTH AT HOME.

“Let thy mind's sweetness have its operation
Upon thy body, clothes and habitation.”

GEORGE HERBERT.

SYLLABUS OF LECTURES.

- I. SANITARY CONDITION OF THE (1) PERSON, (2) CLOTHES AND BEDDING, (3) HOUSE.
- II. MANAGEMENT OF HEALTH OF (1) ADULTS, (2) WOMEN BEFORE AND AFTER CONFINEMENTS, (3) INFANTS AND CHILDREN.

I. SANITARY CONDITION OF—

(1) *Person*.—Care of the whole body, cleanliness of the skin ; hair and hairbrushes ; teeth and toothbrushes ; simplest appliances sufficient with knowledge, large vessels and much water not indispensable for daily cleansing (though in some cases a bath and much scrubbing with soap are absolutely necessary) ; advantages of friction of the skin. The body the main source of defilement of the air, and the most essential thing to keep clean.

(2) *Clothes and Bedding*.—Clothes to be warm, light and loose, no pressure anywhere ; danger of wearing dirty clothes next the skin, reabsorption of poison cast out by the body ; danger of wearing the same underclothing day and night—importance of airing clothes and bedding ; hanging out non-washing clothes in sunshine ; infection stored up in old clothes and bedding ; danger of using damp sheets and damp underlinen. Bed-reform ; feather beds should be picked, and the tick washed every year.

(3) *House*.—How to choose a healthy dwelling, aspect, situation, not to be in a hole, fogs in valleys, good foundations, value of sunshine and wind, look after water and air and all that poisons them ; you *must* swallow the air in your house ; fresh air will do—even with poor food (well cooked), but the best food will not make up for the absence of fresh air. What sanitary authorities to appeal to in the country about drains, water, sewage, privies, etc. Plumbing, traps, what shows a trap to be unsafe, best disinfectants, cleanliness, clean hands, fresh air.

Ventilation in bedrooms, poisonous air in close bedrooms at night, bad smells as danger signals, danger of overcrowding sleeping rooms ; danger of dust, dirt, and damp, how to make the beds, how to clean the floors, walls, bedroom crockery, kitchen pots and pans. Foul floors a source of danger, bricks porous, interstices between boards may become filled with decaying matter ; dangerous to sluice with much water, wipe with a damp cloth, and rub with a dry one. Clean wall-papers *not* put up over old dirty ones ; merits of whitewash, effect of direct sunlight, danger of uninhabited rooms, the genteel parlour chilling to the bone kept for company ; danger of dirty milk pans and jugs, kitchen tables, chopping blocks, etc. Water hard and soft—see that it *is* water, not water plus sewage ; that milk *is* milk—not milk plus water plus sewage.

II. MANAGEMENT OF HEALTH OF—

(1) *Adults*.—Diet, influence of sex, age, climate, occupation, variety ; animal food, vegetable food, milk, butter, cheese, eggs, etc. Effects of insufficient food, of unwholesome food, food insufficiently cooked ; danger of diseased meat, of decaying fish, meat, fruit, and of unripe fruit and vegetables, spread of disease through milk. Chills, constipation, diarrhoea, indigestion, ruptures, rheumatism, gathered fingers, etc.

(2) *Women before and after Confinements*.—Diet, fresh air, cheerfulness, danger of blood poisoning by lying-in on dirty feather beds.

(3) *Infants and Children*.—Nursing, weaning, hand feeding, regular intervals between feeding, flatulence, thrush, convulsions, bronchitis, croup. Simple hints to mothers about healthy conditions for children, cleanliness, food, what to give to prevent constipation or diarrhoea, danger of giving children alcohol or

narcotics, danger of a heavy head-covering to a child while bones of skull still open—deadliness of soothing syrups, how to recognise the symptoms of coming illness in body and mind; fever, hip disease, curvature of the spine, indigestion, sleeplessness, drowsiness, headache, peevishness, etc. *What to do till the Doctor comes.*—If clothes catch fire, or for burns, scalds, bites, cuts, stings, injuries to the head, swallowing fruit stones, pennies, pins, etc. *After the Doctor has left*, how to take care of convalescents, how to feed, danger of chills, over-work at school, etc.

TECHNICAL EDUCATION.

EXAMINATION PAPER SET BY GEORGE WILSON,
M.A., M.D., FOR LADIES ATTENDING HEALTH
LECTURES.

TWO HOURS ALLOWED.

- 1.—What are the chief causes of Infant Mortality ?
Give instructions with regard to the rearing and feeding of infants.
- 2.—Why is milk a typical food ?
Name some of the diseases conveyed through the agency of cows' milk. What precautions would you take in storing milk ?
- 3.—What are the chief causes which make houses unhealthy ?
Divide your answer under the following heads :
 - (1)—the ground on which the house stands ;
 - (2)—the parts of the house itself especially as regards the supply of air, and water, and the contrivances for the removal of refuse ; and
 - (3)—the habits of the people living in it.
- 4.—It is notorious that children are often burned !
What precautions, of a general kind, would you recommend, and how would you treat a burn, scald, or bite until medical help is obtained ?

EXAMINER'S REPORT.

7, AVON PLACE, WARWICK,
May 11th, 1892.

SIR,

In accordance with instructions received, I beg to report that on the 6th inst. I examined twelve ladies who had attended the course of Lectures on Health, delivered by Dr. De'Ath, of Buckingham, under the Technical Education Grant of the County Council.

I had previously the opportunity of conferring with Dr. De'Ath concerning the scope and substance of his lectures, and may be permitted to say that the synopsis of his course fully met the views expressed in Miss Florence Nightingale's letter, with regard to the training and usefulness of "Health Visitors." But in addition to his lectures, Dr. De'Ath informed me that he took his class with him to inspect a village, or parts of it, and this I regard as a most important object lesson, which I fully tested in the oral examination, and with very gratifying results.

Apart from the examination itself, I had also the opportunity of reading essays sent in by all the candidates on subjects of a homely, practical nature, submitted to Miss Florence Nightingale, and on the whole was very much pleased with the style in which these essays were written. Indeed, as regards the essays and the written papers sent in at the examination, I may say that they exhibit a high standard of excellence in the majority of instances, and are alike creditable to teacher and pupils.

In order to test the capabilities of the candidates to teach, the examination was made an oral as well as a written one. I enclose the papers and questions which were set, and may say, with regard to the oral examination, that I was very much pleased with the intimate knowledge of physiology and the laws of health, as well as of home sanitation, which was shown by the majority of the candidates.

Judging from the results of the oral, as well as of the written examination, I place the names of the candidates in the following order of merit list :—

- | | |
|----------------------|------------|
| 1. MISS DEYNS. | 7. MISS — |
| 2. MISS L. ROWLAND. | 8. MISS — |
| 3. MISS A. BARTLETT. | 9. MISS — |
| 4. MISS NEGUS. | 10. MISS — |
| 5. MISS PEARCE. | 11. MISS — |
| 6. MISS FAULKNER. | 12. MISS — |

I consider that the first six on this list showed sufficient knowledge of the laws of health and home sanitation to qualify them for teaching the subject, namely :—

- | | |
|----------------------|-------------------|
| 1. MISS DEYNS. | 4. MISS NEGUS. |
| 2. MISS L. ROWLAND. | 5. MISS PEARCE. |
| 3. MISS A. BARTLETT. | 6. MISS FAULKNER. |

The first three—Miss Deyns, Miss L. Rowland, and Miss Bartlett—sent in exceptionally good papers, and also acquitted themselves exceedingly well in the oral examination.

I am, Sir,

Your obedient Servant,

GEORGE WILSON, M.A., M.D.

Examiner.

DR. DE'ATH'S REPORT TO THE COUNTY
COUNCIL TECHNICAL EDUCATION
COMMITTEE.

To H. M. WILLIAMS, Esq.,
Secretary of the North Bucks Technical Education Committee.

BUCKINGHAM,
May 12, 1892.

SIR,

I beg to inform you that I have received the Report, which has been forwarded to you, of the examination that concluded the course of instruction upon "Health at Home," and, I presume, that now your Committee will desire me to send the following short account of my work. I gave fourteen lectures, which were attended by sixteen ladies who desired to become "Teachers," and also sixty to seventy other ladies.

The lectures were supplemented by classes after each lecture, by the taking of notes, by the answering of questions on paper and orally, by the writing of essays on parts of the syllabus, by private study, and by a visit to a village near Buckingham.

The twelve ladies who entered for the examination (the others having retired) have carefully and regularly gone through this course of preparation for their duties. I have not felt myself at liberty to find out how much time the successful candidates could devote to the work of teaching health, as the result of the examination has not been made known to them.

I trust that your Committee will be able to send a certain number of Teachers to different groups of villages in North Bucks to give weekly instruction in the subject of "Health at Home."

I should be glad to work up with each Teacher the exact course and method of instruction which should be given.

Your Committee may desire to send Teachers to other parts of the county or to other counties, and I have already received a request for information on this matter from a distant county.

I should be glad to meet your Committee, or any part of it, for the purpose of settling some definite plan of organisation, which could not with any advantage be discussed within this report, even if I had, as I have not, any right to do so.

I believe that those who have satisfied Dr. Wilson will (as they gain experience in teaching and knowledge of their work) enable the Committee to congratulate themselves on the step which they have so wisely taken to bring some knowledge of the laws of health to the minds and homes of the people.

It is impossible for me to conclude this short report without expressing to you, personally, my thanks for all your courtesy, and for the information which you have so often given me.

I am, Sir,

Your obedient servant,

GEORGE H. DE'ATH.

SYLLABUS OF HEALTH LECTURES.

For Village Mothers.

- I.—Our Homes.**
1. The Bedroom.
 2. The Kitchen and Parlour.
 3. The Back-yard and Garden.
- II.—Ourselves.**
1. The Skin, and how to keep the body clean—washing.
 2. The Circulation, and how to keep the body warm—clothes.
 3. The Digestion, and how to nourish the body—food.
- III.**
- EXTRA LECTURES.**
1. What to do till the Doctor comes, and after the Doctor has left.
 2. Management of Infants and Children.

SYLLABUS.

Lecture I. (a) Introductory—Busy life of cottage mothers; why they should come to classes; preventable illnesses; the mothers should ask questions, and help the Lecturer by relating their own experiences; proposed plan of the Lecturers.

Bedroom. (b) What we want to get into a Bedroom; What we want to get out of a Bedroom; Sunshine—its effect on health; fresh air—difference between clean air and foul air; an unaired bedroom is a box of bad air; ventilation near the ceiling; fireplace—no chimney-boards.

(c) Furniture of bedroom—the bed and bedding; walls; carpet; airing of room during the day; cleansing of bedroom crockery; danger of unemptied slops; how to get rid of dust—washing of floors; vermin; damp; lumber; fresh air and sunshine in the bedroom by day promote sleep by night.

LECTURE II.—THE KITCHEN AND PARLOUR.

Kitchen. Danger from refuse of food.—Grease in all the rough parts of kitchen table and chopping block—crumbs and scraps in interstices of floor—remains of sour milk in saucepans, jugs—all refuse poisons the air, spoils fresh food, and attracts vermin, rats, beetles, etc.—bricks, porous, dangerous to sluice with too much water; water for cooking whence obtained—often water plus sewage; milk easily injured, often milk plus water plus sewage. How to clean kitchen table, crockery, pots and pans; how to keep milk cool; danger of dirty sink.

Parlour. Danger of uninhabited rooms without sunlight and fresh air; genteel parlour chilling to the bone; clean papers not to be put over dirty ones; tea leaves for sweeping carpets.

LECTURE III.—THE BACK-YARD AND GARDEN.

Back-yard. Where are slops emptied? Slops to be poured slowly down a drain—not hastily thrown down to make a pool round the drain; gratings of drain to be kept clean and passage free; soil round the house kept pure that pure air may come in at the window; danger of throwing bedroom slops out of window; no puddles allowed to stand round walls; privies' refuse to be got into the soil as soon as possible; danger of cesspools; well and pump; wells are upright drains, so soil round them should be pure; bad smells danger signals; pigsties, moss-litter to absorb liquid manure, cheap and profitable; danger from pools of liquid manure making the whole soil foul.

LECTURE IV.—THE SKIN, AND HOW TO KEEP THE BODY CLEAN.

The Skin. Simple account of functions of skin.—As a covering to the body; beauty dependent on healthy state of skin; use of the skin as throwing out waste matter; dangers of a choked skin; how and when to wash; care of whole body; teeth—sad suffering by their neglect; hair and hair brushes; large vessels and much water not indispensable for daily cleansing; advantages of a bath; friction of the skin; not babies only but men and women require daily washing; the body the source of defilement of the air.

LECTURE V.—THE CIRCULATION, AND HOW TO KEEP THE BODY WARM.

Clothes. Simple account of how the heart and lungs act.—Clothes to be warm and loose ; no pressure ; test for tight lacing, if measurement round the waist is more with the clothes off than when stays are worn ; danger of dirty clothes next the skin—reabsorption of poison ; danger of wearing the same clothes day and night ; best materials for clothing ; why flannel is so valuable ; danger of sitting in wet clothes and boots ; too little air causes more chills than too much ; the body not easily chilled when warm and well clothed.

LECTURE VI.—THE DIGESTION, AND HOW TO NOURISH THE BODY.

Food. Simple account of how food is digested and turned into blood.—Worse food (well cooked) and fresh air better than best food without fresh air ; diet, not medicine, ensures health ; uses of animal and of vegetable food ; danger of all ill-cooked and half-cooked food ; nourishing value of vegetables and whole-meal bread ; danger of too little food and too much at the wrong times ; dangers of uncooked meat, specially pork, diseased meat, decaying fish, unripe and over-ripe fruit ; and stewed tea ; vital importance of cooked fruit for children, stewed apples and pears, damsons, blackberries ; value of milk as food ; influence of diet upon constipation, diarrhoea, indigestion, convulsions in children ; small changes of diet promote appetite and health.

EXTRA LECTURES.

LECTURE VII.—WHAT TO DO TILL THE DOCTOR COMES, AND AFTER THE DOCTOR HAS LEFT.

Small Treatment. Grave danger of being one's own doctor, of taking quack medicines, or a medicine which has cured some one else in quite a different case ; liquid food only to be given till the doctor comes ; danger signals of illness and how to recognise them ; hourly dangers of ruptures if not completely supported by trusses ; what to do if clothes catch fire ; and for burns, scalds, bites, cuts, stings, injuries to the head and to the eye,

swallowing fruit stones, pins, etc.—simple rules to avoid infection. After the doctor has left. How to take care of convalescents; how to feed; when to keep rooms dark, and when to admit plenty of light; danger of chills.

LECTURE VIII.—MANAGEMENT OF INFANTS AND CHILDREN.

Infants and Children. Nursing, weaning, hand feeding, regular intervals between feeding, flatulence, thrush, convulsions, bronchitis, croup; simple hints to mothers about healthy conditions for children—Baths, diet, how to prevent constipation and diarrhoea; what to do in sudden attacks of convulsions and croup; deadly danger of giving “soothing syrups” or alcohol; headache often caused by bad eyesight; symptoms of over-work at school—headache, worry, talking in the sleep; danger to babies and little children of any violence, jerks and sudden movements, loud voices, slaps, box on the ear; good effects upon the health of gentleness, firmness and cheerfulness; no child can be well who is not bright and merry, and brought up in fresh air and sunshine, surrounded by love—the sunshine of the soul.

Miss Nightingale's Letter to Village Mothers.

DEAR HARD-WORKING FRIENDS,

I am a hard-working woman too. May I speak to you? And will you excuse me? tho' not a mother.

You feel with me that every mother who brings a child into the world has the duty laid upon her of bringing up the child in such health as will enable him to do the work of his life.

But tho' you toil all day for your children, and are so devoted to them, this is not at all an easy task.

We should not attempt to practise dressmaking or any other trade, without any training for it; but it is generally impossible for any woman to get any teaching about the management of health, yet health is to be learnt. And altho' you are more skilled in the practical work of everyday life, yet this Lady Lecturer has had special opportunities of studying the reasons why certain things are good or bad for health.

But it depends very much more upon you than upon her that these lectures should be of any use to you. You must make use of her, and get out of her the particular knowledge that you want.

The cottage homes of England are, after all, the most important of the homes of any class, that they should be pure in every sense, pure in body and in mind.

Boys and girls must grow up healthy, with clean minds, and clean bodies, and clean skins.

And for this to be possible, the air, the earth, and the water that they grow up in and have around them must be clean. Fresh air, not bad air; clean earth, not foul earth; pure water, not dirty water. And the first teachings and impressions they have at home must all be pure and gentle and firm. It is *home* that teaches the child after all, more than any other schooling. A child learns before it is three whether it shall obey its mother or not, and before it is seven wise men tell us that its character is almost formed.

There is, too, another thing—orderliness. We know your daily toil and love, may not the busiest and hardest life be somewhat lightened, the day mapped out, so that each duty has the same hours?

Now you may compare this lady's inexperience and your practical knowledge of the things of everyday life. But, though she may be inexperienced in the things you have to do, yet she may by her knowledge in a humble, not patronising, or positive, or prying way, help you to help yourselves.

This is not a lecture so much as a talk, a homely talk about homes.

If you would make a friend of her and ask her questions, it would be far more possible for her to help.

Then think what enormous extra trouble it entails on mothers where there is sickness. It is worth while to try to keep the family in health, to prevent the sorrow, the anxiety, the trouble of illness in the house, of which so much can be prevented.

When a child has lost its health, how often the mother says, "Oh, if I had only known, but there was no one to tell me." And, after all, it is health and not sickness that is our natural state—the state that God intends for us. There are more people to pick us up when we fall than to enable us to stand upon our feet. God did not intend all mothers to be accompanied by doctors, but He meant all children to be cared for by mothers. God bless your work and labour of love. Now after *our* kind wise doctor, who cares for your health as much as for your sickness, has left, will you not settle down to a friendly homely talk, and try to get out of the lady what you can, and God bless us all, and He *will* bless.

(Signed) FLORENCE NIGHTINGALE.

October 10, 1892.

HINTS FOR HEALTH VISITORS.

HINTS OFFERED FOR THE CONSIDERATION OF HEALTH VISITORS, BY A MOTHER.

A village lecture should be like a picture-book, with lively images to rouse the imagination, and retain the attention of village mothers.

Such images must be drawn from perfectly well-known objects or events in home life.

If the lecture is to be on the skin—as, for instance, Lecture IV. of your own syllabus—make an interesting opening, perhaps by drawing vividly two descriptions.

First: A Child—one of the village children, with a beautiful healthy skin smooth as satin, without a pimple or a scratch anywhere, and so clean that there is no stain or soil on any part of the body: a clear complexion, rosy cheeks, cherry lips—such a child as any mother would long to kiss.

Secondly: A Leper—such as they have read of in the Bible, a loathsome horrible object, the skin all wounds and sores, so repulsive to others, so painful to himself, that as a miracle he asks to be made “clean,” and the gracious answer comes, “I will, be thou clean.”

Then show that the difference between the child and the leper is just the difference between a healthy and unhealthy skin; and what a gift a clean skin is—then something of this sort might be said:—

“Women who are already so busy and so tired that they do not know how to get through their day’s work do not want to be given more trouble, or to be told of anything that requires more money; therefore you will not care to do anything more than you have been accustomed to do all your lives—unless I can really show you.

First: That the difference between a clean skin and a dirty skin is the difference between health and sickness.

Secondly : That however busy and tired you may be, it is worth your while to keep the skin of your whole body clean. If you are really convinced of this, you will make time to do it, and you will wish to learn—

Thirdly : How the skin can best be kept clean.

A very little might be said about the two skins ; the skin as a covering, and as equalising the heat of the body, and then enter very *fully*, but not *learnedly*, into the work of the pores. The body choked and poisoned by its own waste substances might be compared to a house whence nothing was thrown away—the scullery choked with old fat, potato peelings, &c., the drain from the sink stopped up, the grate full of cinders, the floor of dust, the table of grease and crumbs ; none of these things were dirty or useless at first, it is the keeping them that makes the house uninhabitable.

Then speak very plainly of the offensive condition of an unwashed body, the smell of the feet, the horrible state of the hair, the decay and pain in the teeth, &c., the consequent poisoning of the air of the room, &c.

Then *how* and *when* the body can best be washed. The entire want of privacy in the bedrooms makes it sometimes more possible for the mother of the family to make herself clean, not on rising, but when the early work is done, when the saucepan is on the fire, and before the children come in from school at twelve, or in the afternoon before tea. This should, without giving offence, be drawn out by careful questions, asking what plan the women would *recommend* rather than what they *do*.

The care of the body should be connected with purity and self-respect, with a beauty which age cannot wear away ; mothers should work upon and encourage their girls' natural wish to look nice, make them proud of beautifully brushed and well-plaited hair rather than that of the smart hat above it.

I should not be inclined to attempt a technical description of the skin, but having well got into their heads about the use of perspiration and the function of the pores, there should be much sympathy and imagination put into the question of how, when, and where, father, mother, Jack, Molly, Betty, and the babies are to be washed and soaped and rubbed and dried. Sufficient towels would be a great practical difficulty ; the lecturing lady should

have a memorandum of the price of each article she recommends, the price of tooth-brushes as compared with artificial teeth might be included. A private note-book will be of use for writing down prices, practical recipes, simple methods of ventilation, &c. Any good anecdote or illustration the lecturer comes across in her reading that might serve to enliven a lecture should be noted down. Questions may be asked which she is unable to answer at the moment; these should be written down with the name and address of the questioner, to be answered at the next lecture.

One great difficulty of an inexperienced lecturer is not to be *dull*, and the sense that one is growing dull, is in itself so depressing one becomes duller. To judge of this, address yourself to the most stolid and vacant face in your audience; if you can light up that face with interest you are succeeding, but if all you are saying falls flat, make some break in your lecture—ask some question of the women near you—anything will do—the price of soap, how many bedrooms they have, whether they keep pigs—anything to bring your audience into the subject, and to break the monotony of the sound of your own voice.

Do not give too many facts at once, but try to hammer one or two points home, returning to them again and again from different points of view.

Do not be put out at interruptions—specially criticisms; welcome them with great civility, and if you cannot answer them fully, promise to look the matter up, and discuss it with your questioner before you begin the next lecture. Nothing ought to be so helpful as the remarks made, or the faults found with the lecture, by the village women themselves. If one questioner is snubbed no other woman will express her opinion, but if a criticism perhaps rudely made is received most civilly, the lecturer will gain the sympathy of her audience, and the information which will help her most.

The Health Visitor should consider the lecture as giving her a foothold for knowing the cottage mothers, it gives her the opportunity of knowing them all together, and of laying down principles of health. In the visits to the cottage homes, she has to apply the general teaching to each special case.

The lectures will be a dismal failure unless the cottage women support the Visitors.

Tennyson has given us a vivid picture of what the Health Visitor ought *not* to be—"The Village Wife" is speaking of the Squire's daughters:—

. . . "Miss Annie, the heldest, I niver not took to she: . . .

Fur hoffens we talkt o' my darter es died o' the fever at fall:

An' I thowt 'twur the will o' the Lord, but Miss Annie she said it wur draäins,

Fur she hedn't naw coomfut in 'er, an' 'arned naw thanks fur 'er paäins! . . .

An' es fur Miss Annie, she called me afoor my awn foäłks to my faäce,

'A hignorant village wife as 'ud hev to be larn'd her awn plaäce.'

No lady trained on Miss Nightingale's principles, or who had caught the faintest spark of her spirit, could so fail as Miss Annie did in sympathy towards her hearers. Indeed, Miss Nightingale considers that the test of success is the gaining the confidence of the village mothers, and being invited to help them in their own homes, when they can feel that "The Health Visitor comes not to find fault, but to find friends."

Love for the cottage mothers, love of the work, and love of the Master for whom all work should be done, can alone fit a Health Visitor to have any "coomfut in 'er."

M. M. V.

SPECIMEN LECTURE I.—OUR HOMES.

(a) INTRODUCTORY.

(b) THE BEDROOM.

(a) When I come into such a village as yours in the afternoon, I see a number of cottages with bright pots of flowers in the windows, and neat gardens, with clothes hanging out to dry in the back-yard, and little children playing about the doorstep, generally well dressed and with clothes neatly mended; and when I look at such things I think to myself, How hard those wives and mothers must work to keep such homes!

Busy Life of
Cottage
Mothers.

As I leave it again in the evening, I meet the men coming in from the fields tired and hungry, and often wet and cold besides, and I know that the wives are doing their best to give them a hot supper, a comfortable chair by the fireside, and a loving welcome. Does it not seem astonishing what one woman has to get through, when she must wash and cook and clean and make and mend indoors, and buy what the family wants, and spend the wages to the best advantage—with only one head to plan and one pair of hands to do all the work?

It would be quite impossible, but that in a true home two good angels have taken up their abode; the name of one is *Love* and the other is *Industry*.

Now you may well say to me, When a woman loves her husband and children, and works for them all day long and often longer, what is there for her to learn—and why should she take the trouble to come to these classes as if she were a girl at school?

Why they
should come
to the
Classes.

It must be so difficult for busy women to give up time on a week-day to come and listen to a lecture, that unless I can show you that it is worth your while to attend the lectures, and that you can feel that you have learnt something which you really care to know, of course I cannot expect you to come at all.

There is one good angel more besides Love and Industry that should be in every home, and that angel's name is *Knowledge*.

Ignorance is such a terrible thing, and is so swiftly punished by the suffering it brings with it, that even if a mother loves her children and is ready to die for them, she may be doing or allowing things to injure their health, if she is ignorant, that will cause herself and them infinite trouble and sorrow—and every mother will agree that *to keep children in health* is better for them and better for herself than the most loving nursing in sickness.

Then you will ask, Can I learn anything to help me to make my family healthy and strong by coming to these classes? Yes, you can learn many things. First, because much is known now about health which our mothers and grandmothers never could know, and which it is our duty to learn and to teach our children. Secondly, because we know now that God means us to be healthy and happy and that many illnesses come, not because He sends them, but because ignorant people have broken His laws—and the more we learn about these laws the healthier the world will be.

Many dreadful illnesses like smallpox and ague, once very common, have now almost disappeared in England.

You have heard about cholera—many hundreds of **Preventable Illnesses.** poor people in Germany died of it last summer. It is a terrible illness; strong men and women and little children are seized with awful pain in the stomach, and die in agony in a few days, often in a few hours.

This terrible cholera came into our county of Bucks about fifty years ago, and old people still remember how many people died, especially those who kept ducks at Aylesbury, and were living close to stagnant water. But *then* nobody knew how the cholera came, or how to fight against it—there seemed nothing for good people to do but to say it was God's will and to be patient and die. But now we know that it was *not* God's will that the cholera should come at all: He gave us clean earth, and clean water, and clean pure air—but men have made earth, water, and air foul as far as they have been able—and cholera is produced because far away in hot countries poor ignorant people live in dirty houses, drink dirty water, breathe foul air, and keep their bodies horribly dirty because they know no better. We also know that to a town or village where the people have clean habits,

and the air and water and soil are pure, and the drainage good, the cholera will never come, or if it is brought in from the outside it will not spread, and no second person need catch it if proper care is taken of the first case.

It is the same with scarlet fever, typhoid fever, diphtheria, and many other illnesses of which little children die so easily.

Then if so many kinds of illness are preventable—that is to say, if they need not come at all into a village, and if they do come they need not spread; shall we not say that it is the duty of every woman to learn about Health—how to keep it good—and how to mend it—and that no mother can do her duty to her children without understanding something about the wonderful bodies that God has made them, and how to keep these bodies in good working order?

If you agree with me so far, may I talk to you about your houses, your clothes, and your food, and about the health of your bodies, and if you are able to come to all the lectures, about your bodies themselves; of the uses of the skin, how the blood flows, how the lungs take in air, and how food is digested, that you may judge for yourselves about many things which doctors and nurses recommend to you.

Lastly, I hope to give you some simple directions for cases of accident and illness, what to do before the doctor comes and after he has left—and about the management of
Health. infants and children; a puzzling question which many a young mother, ignorant and inexperienced, has had to work out for herself, at great cost to her first babies, on whom the experiments had been tried.

But if I do my best to make these lectures useful, they will be very dull indeed unless you will help me. I hope you will ask me a great many questions, and that you will always stop me when you do not agree with me, and tell me so. I may advise you to do something that is right in itself, and yet you may think that it is impossible to carry out—or I may say something which according to your experience is not true. Now, if you are too civil and kind to contradict me, you will go away dissatisfied—and when you get outside the door you will say to each other, that I know nothing of your real difficulties, and that if I lived in your cottage for a week I

**The
 Mothers
 should ask
 Questions,
 and help
 the Lec-
 turer by
 relating
 their own
 Experiences.**

should not talk such nonsense. Now *that* will not help you nor me either. But if you will kindly show me what the difficulties are and tell me to my face when I say anything you do not approve of, or do not agree with, I shall certainly learn a great deal from your experience and practical knowledge—and I hope I may be able to teach you something, if we can talk over the questions together and so find out what is best.

Now may I talk to you about our Homes and what can be done to make even a bad cottage much healthier than many good ones are now?—and then I hope you will tell me about your own houses, and if you will allow me, I should like to come and see them, and talk over with you what could be done to make them more wholesome.

In considering *our Homes*, may we talk first about (1) *the Bedroom*; (2) about the *Kitchen and Parlour*; (3) about the Back-yard and Garden.

Proposed
Plan of the
Lectures.

To-day we will think only of the bedroom and its contents. I should like to write out on the black-board what we want to get into a bedroom, and what we want to get out of a bedroom.

I. *What do we want to get into a bedroom?*

What we
want to get
into a
Bedroom.

(a) *Light*, and not only light, but *Sunshine* and *Fresh Air*.

(b) A good bed, a washing-stand and crockery, a chest of drawers, some strong clothes-pegs, and two

or three wooden chairs.

II. *What do we want to get out of a Bedroom?*

(a) Bad air, bad smells, and damp.

What we
want to get
out of a
Bedroom.

(b) Dust, dirty water, chamber slops, soiled linen, old clothes, and odds and ends.

If you have the choice, choose a south room, that is, a room into which the sun shines in the middle of the day.

Sunshine makes a room healthy.

I have been into a cottage where a sick woman was confined to her bed all day in a room looking north, into which no sunshine ever came, though there was a south room in the house she might have had, because she did not know that a sunny room would have helped her to get well, or at least have made her more cheerful and comfortable while she was sick.

Sunshine;
Its Effect on
Health.

Sick people and children should sleep in sunny rooms, and windows should be kept very clean to let in as much light as possible, and should be kept open all the early part of the day to let the sun stream in upon the beds.

The sun is the greatest enemy of damp, dirt, and disease ; he will do his best to get rid of the damp for you, to show you the dirt that you may get rid of it, and when damp and dirt are gone, disease will be much less likely either to come or to stay with you ; therefore make every ray of sunshine welcome into your rooms.

Fresh air is the most important thing of all to make your bedroom healthy. We all know the difference between dirty water

Fresh Air ; Difference between Clean Air and Foul Air.	and clean water, but it is more difficult to know how to distinguish between clean air and dirty air, because we cannot <i>see</i> dirty air, though we ought to be able to smell it.
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When you pour clean water into a clean tub, in which you mean to wash your clothes, you could drink it safely and with pleasure—but when all the soiled linen has been washed in it, the water would be very nasty and dirty, and if a little child ran to drink out of the tub then, you would call out to him to stop him because you would know it was dangerous to take dirty water into our bodies. There is just the same difference between the clean, pure air we breathe into our bodies and the air when we breathe it out again after we have finished with it, as there is between the water before and after the clothes have been washed in it ; if we could live always out of doors we should never breathe bad air, because what we breathe out of our lungs is blown away directly, and there is always fresh clean air for us to breathe in.

If I were to put my head into a box, I should soon be suffocated, because I should breathe over and over again the bad poisonous air that my lungs have tried to get rid of, even if the box were a large one.

An Unaired Bedroom a Box of Bad Air.	A bedroom into which no fresh air comes is just <i>a large box of bad air</i>. If a person sleeps in a room without a chimney and with the window and door shut, he is not <i>suffocated</i> because some air forces itself under the door and where the windows do not fit ; but the air will be so bad and thick and heavy, that anybody coming into the room from out of doors will smell a nasty smell
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in the room, and feel quite choked, though the person who has slept in the room does not notice it. You can prove the badness of the air in other ways—milk will turn sour in such a room and meat putrid, and if the jug on the washing-stand is filled overnight, it will be found in the morning with a film on the water.

Children suffer more than grown-up people from sleeping in bad air, babies often toss about and disturb their mothers by crying, who would sleep quietly and well in pure air—and grown-up people often wake with headaches and sore throats, and are not refreshed as they ought to be for their next day's work, because they have not had a really good night.

The difficulty is how to let in a little stream of fresh air at night near the top of the room without letting a cold draught blow upon the bed. There are many ways of
Ventilation near the Ceiling. arranging this; two small pieces of perforated zinc let into the wall near the ceiling in different parts of the room sometimes act well; but as the best way of airing the room depends upon the kind of window you have and how it opens, I should like to talk to you about this in your own bedrooms, if you are good enough to invite me by and by to come and see you in your houses.

If you have a chimney in your bedroom it is much easier to keep the room fresh and sweet, for the bad air will escape up the chimney, therefore never stop up the opening with
No Chimney-boards. a chimney-board or a sack; and a lamp of mineral oil put in the grate will help to air the room by creating a draft up the chimney. All complaints of the chest and consumption are likely to be brought on by breathing foul air; consumption is, as you know, an illness of the lungs, and to breathe bad air is as dangerous for the lungs as to eat bad food is for the stomach.

Many cottages have neither proper windows nor a bedroom fireplace, and the smaller the room is, and the more people sleep in it, the more poisonous the air becomes at night, and the more important it is to have a little stream of fresh air coming into it all night long from some small opening near the ceiling. A draught coming in under the door chills the feet. There is at least this comfort, that a small bedroom kept clean and well aired is more healthy than a large room neglected and dirty.

A word about the furniture. What makes a good bed? A

strong, light iron bedstead on castors, without curtains or vallance, is the most wholesome, but if you have vallances to look pretty—and some people think that a bed looks bare without—they should be like a frill, at least six inches from the ground, to let the air pass well under the bed. It need hardly be said, keep no dirty clothes under the bed, *nothing* at all but the chamber utensil, which should, if possible, have a lid.

This is the best kind of bedstead—the worst is the old heavy wooden bedstead, with four posts and heavy worsted curtains and a top. When the curtains are drawn the bad air is shut in with the sleepers, and it is about as easy to move as a haystack. A bedstead should be easily moved, so that the wall behind it and the floor below it may be easily swept and dusted.

As to the bedding, a straw palliasse below and a hair mattress or a wool mattress above, are the most wholesome ; a mattress is much healthier than a feather-bed, but many people like a feather-bed best, it is soft and warm and less expensive.

If a feather-bed is used it should be kept very clean ; it should often be hung out in the sunshine and wind to air, and once a year the feathers should be taken out and picked and the ticking washed.

This is a troublesome thing to recommend, but dirty feather-beds are so dangerous ; they get soaked with the perspiration from the skin, and will make all the air of the bedroom impure. A woman who is confined on a dirty feather-bed may get fever from it, though the sheets over it may be clean.

A good bed costs money, but a young couple furnishing would do well to spend all the money they can afford on bedding ; a good mattress and hair pillows, light Witney blankets (and no counterpane which does not let the air through), are the best.

If the bed is good it is easy to make a temporary washing-stand and cupboard with rough deal packing-cases till better furniture can be bought by degrees.

We may talk about walls and wall-papers when we come to consider the parlour ; a whitewashed wall is the healthiest for a bedroom, as it can be constantly made clean again. A little colour may be added to the whitewash to make it look more cheerful—a 1-lb. packet of Cannon's Con-

centrated Patent Size in a pailful of the wash. This is much better than glue, and makes a fast colour.

Against the door, and in some convenient places against the wall, we will try to get some strong pegs, because clothes when taken off at night are much better aired and dried by being hung up than by being folded on a chair, or, worse still, left in a heap upon the floor.

I have not put a carpet on the list of things wanted, because a bedroom is better without one; a carpet under the bed is positively unwholesome, as holding the dust; small rugs that are easily shaken out of window are the only carpets advisable.

Floors are often ill-laid, leaving wide chinks between the boards. The following receipt may be safely recommended for filling up the openings: Sprinkle sand in the chinks, press down and put good glazier's putty; the sand makes a firm base, and the putty becomes quite hard, so that no wet can get through.

Now we will think of the things to be *turned out* of our bedrooms, as we would chase rats out of the larder, or caterpillars out of the cabbage-beds. The worst of all our enemies is bad air—the refuse air that our bodies have done with; and the question is how to make the air in our bedrooms as fresh as the air out of doors without being cold.

When you get up in the morning you probably do not make your bed at once, because there is the fire to light and breakfast to be got ready for the husband and sons who are going out to work; and this is quite right, because the bed ought to be aired before it is made. Therefore when you leave your bedroom turn the bedclothes right down, and open the window.

You do not want a draught at night, but when the room is empty you want as strong a draught as possible to cleanse the air and blow out all the bad air that has been made during the night.

There is one vessel in a bedroom more important than any other to be kept clean, and to be emptied quickly, and that is the utensil often kept in a very dirty state under the bed, to infect the bedding and poison the whole air. It is impossible to make too much fuss about keeping this chamber utensil clean and teaching

Clothes-pegs.

Carpets.

Airing of
Bedroom
during the
Day.

Cleansing of
Bedroom
Crockery.

your girls the importance of doing the same. Grown-up persons in health should not use the utensil in the bedroom the last thing at night, but should go out to the privy; when old or sick people and little children have to use it at night, it should be emptied at once and rinsed out, *not left under the bed full.*

A good mistress of a house will keep this vessel as clean inside and outside as a cup or a wash-hand basin; there should be no greasy feeling or smell about it whatever. If a utensil has been long neglected it will be necessary to clean it with boiling water and soda, a bit of rag tied round a stick, or a clean dry mop made of tow, should be well rubbed on the inside to get the furring off. If it will not come off readily it may be useful to buy a little muriatic acid (a 2-oz. bottle is usually sufficient) and pour it into the utensil, rubbing it round the inside with the tow mop. It is dangerous to rub a dirty vessel with the bare hand, because if there is any scratch or cut in the skin it may cause a gathered finger, or poison the whole arm. When once the utensil is clean it is easy to keep it so; when it has been emptied in the morning the soapy water in the basin, which has been used for washing, should be poured into it; rinse it well round, and this will keep it quite clean, if done every morning, and a little cold water should be left standing in the utensil. Whatever other work you have to put off, empty your slops early in the day; unemptied slops poison the air and foul the furniture—never leave them to the afternoon. This is the golden rule for a healthy bedroom.

If the bedroom has been well aired and all the vessels in it made clean, there ought to be no bad air or bad smells remaining in it—but we have still to consider how to turn the dust out.

It is *not* turning it out, just to disturb it from one place and send it all into the air, only to settle down again as before when you have gone out of the room. Dust must be wiped with a damp cloth to which it can stick. A long brush with a damp cloth tied over it should be passed over the floor, and especially under the bed, and when dirty it should be rinsed out again in a pail of water and well wrung out. You do not want to make the floor wet, only that

**Danger of
Unemptied
Slops.**

**How to get
rid of Dust.**

the cloth should lick up the dust. If this is done daily, it ought to be enough to have a great turn out of the room once a fort-

night, when the floor should be scrubbed with soap, but *not made too wet*, and wiped dry again; a dry

sunny day should be chosen, so that the boards may have time to get quite dry before night. But boards do not always fit close, so that your floor does not dry; this is a matter we may talk of again when we consider the kitchen floor, as there little bits of food and dirt lodge between ill-fitting bricks or joints, and decaying matter forms underneath the floor. A good plan is to trickle down sand and press it down in the chinks, then fill up the top with good glazier's putty. The sand makes a firm bed, and the putty hardens and allows no wet to pass through it.

Perhaps you will let me say a word about another enemy we sometimes have to fight in our bedrooms—I mean *vermin*. They

sometimes come in by no fault of the housewife, and increase frightfully, to the great discomfort of

the family. I knew an old couple in Liverpool who had only one room; the old man was bedridden with rheumatism, the old woman kept everything beautifully clean and neat. She supported them both by washing, with some help from the parish; she was able to take the clothes to the public wash-house, but she brought them home to iron by the old man's bedside, who could not bear her to be out of his sight. They were so fond of each other, but I have come in sometimes and found her in tears, and the husband in a great state of irritation—there was one enemy she could not get rid of—the old wooden bedstead was full of bugs—and when the old man was much tormented by them he would declare that he would rather go to the workhouse—which cut her to the heart.

Now when vermin have got into an old bed, or between the joints of the boards, soap and water alone will not get rid of them. All cracks and joints in the bedstead must be filled up with a thick paste of carbolic powder; all crevices between the planks of the flooring and the skirting boards should be filled with a paste of chloride of lime. The legs of the bed may be placed in saucers filled with water and a little carbolic. Blankets and bedding may be sprinkled daily with Keating's Insect Powder. All this means trouble, but carbolic powder and

chloride of lime are cheap to buy, and you will get rid of vermin of all sorts.

In speaking of *damp* as one of the enemies to be turned out, I need hardly remind you how dangerous it is to sleep in damp

Damp. sheets, or to wear damp clothes; fresh air and sunshine are again our best friends, no room can be dry that is not aired. Every breath we breathe out contains moisture—you know this when you breathe against a looking-glass and make it all dull; this moisture settles on the walls and the furniture, and in frosty weather we can see drops of water running down inside the window-panes: this is the water out of our breath; therefore keep your windows open all the morning and shut them again before sunset or as soon as it gets damp.

One word more about *the lumber and odds and ends* that are sometimes piled up in bedrooms. With all you have to get
Lumber and through in the day, you cannot spare much time to
Odds and dusting your bedroom, therefore have as little in it
Ends. as possible which is not actually wanted.

Boxes and cupboards choke up a small room and leave less room for air. No food of any kind must be kept in a bedroom; it will go bad itself and poison the air. Some people seem to regard the space under the bed as a lumber closet; I have known even coals and sacks of potatoes and wheat kept there, not to mention old worn-out clothes and old boots, and all sorts of unsavoury odds and ends which were thrust out of sight and forgotten, and which made any cleaning under the bed quite impossible.

I hope I have not tired you with all these small details—shall we look again at the blackboard and see all the things we wish to get into our bedrooms, and all the things we wish to get out of our bedrooms—I will read them through once more. If you think I have made too much fuss about the bedroom, the room most out of sight in the house, and most apt to be neglected, I may ask you to remember that children spend about half their day and grown-up people in health about one-third, sick people often the whole of the twenty-four hours in the bedroom—that therefore the state of a room in which so large a part of our lives is spent *must* have a great influence upon our health.

Lastly, that it is by welcoming God's good gifts to us of fresh
Fresh Air and air and sunshine into our bedrooms that we can
Sunshine in hope to obtain the special gift He gives to His beloved
the Bedroom —the gift of sleep.
by Day pro-
mote Sleep by
Night.

MARGARET M. VERNEY.

Extract from a Memorandum from the Buckingham
District Committee on Technical Education to
the Delegates from the Village Committee of—

HEALTH VISITORS.—“ We are instructed to send the two Lady Health Visitors to the villages of—A, B, & C—to give eight lessons at each place on the points most useful to be observed for keeping houses wholesome and the body in good health. We are to request the committees of these villages to obtain for the Visitors the use of a room for the lessons, and make the days and hours of their coming known to the villagers; of which the Committees shall have due notice. Such hours and rooms as those found suitable for Mothers' Meetings would probably be the best for these. . . . This scheme of instruction is the outcome of the suggestions of Miss Florence Nightingale, and we understand that its details have been carefully studied by her. The District Committee feel that no other words should be needed to ensure for it your hearty co-operation as an important, though as yet untested experiment.”

Letter from Dr. De'Ath to persons likely to help the Health Visitors in the Villages.

WEST STREET, BUCKINGHAM,

8th October, 1892.

Dear Sir, or Madam :—

I am writing to ask you to do your best to support the work of _____ who is coming to your village as a Health Visitor. She will lecture on subjects connected with household health and visit, where invited, among the poor to talk over with them the subjects of the lectures and other matters which have any bearing on the health of the household.

I want you to do all that you can to persuade women, and particularly poor women, to go to the lectures and to give the Visitor a fair chance of doing good work.

I shall be pleased to answer any questions you may like to ask, and I should be very glad if you would try and secure an audience for the Visitor and use your influence to get people to ask her to visit them in their cottages and to forward the work in any way in your power.

I understand that _____ will begin her work in your village at _____ on next,

Believe me,

Yours very faithfully,

GEORGE H. DE'ATH.

HEALTH VISITOR'S RETURNS.

BUCKS COUNTY COUNCIL.

Return of Health Visitors.

Lecture given by Miss _____

at _____

on _____ 189 _____

Place of Meeting _____

Approximate No. present _____

Subject of Lecture _____

No. of invitations to visit _____

Preparations for meeting, whether good, indifferent or bad

GENERAL REMARKS AND SUGGESTIONS.

*It is requested that this form be filled in and at once posted to Dr. De'Ath
Buckingham.*

Private.

HEALTH VISITOR'S DIARY.

Health Visitors are requested to furnish such information as may seem important with regard to the houses they are invited to visit. The following heads are suggested for enquiry and observation.

Date.—Day and hour of visit. Time spent in the house. No. of visits paid to this house.

Place.—Name of the village, and in what part of the village. Situation, high or low. Apparent healthiness of the site. Aspect. Character of neighbouring houses, whether good or bad. Is the cottage old or modern? Is the roof thatch, tiles, or slates? General cleanliness.

Inhabitants.—Name of Occupier. Of whom does the family consist? Approximate ages of parents and children. Are there lodgers?

Health.—Are parents healthy? Are inhabitants subject to fever? Do children suffer from illness when teething? Are they subject to sore eyes, headache, swelled tonsils or glands, fits, diarrhoea, or constipation? Is there consumption in the family?

The House.—Number of living-rooms and bedrooms. Where are bedrooms, and have they fireplaces? Do windows open fully? are they near the floor or the ceiling? Is there provision for a thorough draught. Nature and condition of bedding. Where can potatoes, odds and ends be stored? General conditions of floors, walls, and roof. Is there a closed porch, and a back door? Where is food kept? Is there a wash-house? Do chimneys smoke?

Water Supply.—Whence derived? Is it always good and abundant? From well, spring, tank, or conduit? How near to manure or cesspool?

Sink.—Is there one? Where do the slops go? are drains trapped and disconnected? Do drains pass under the house?

Closet.—Nature of closet, how cleaned, and how often? Is there main drainage in the village?

Manure.—Where are the manure pit, pig-sty, refuse heap, and ash heap? Are they liable to drain under the house, or to contaminate water supply? Are they cleaned at stated intervals?

Advice.—Summary of advice given.

Defects.—What can be suggested to remedy principal defects?

Health Visitors are not expected to investigate all these questions in every house, but only such of them as come under their observation and seem to call for remark.

Summary of Scheme for Health-at-Home Training and Teaching to Rural Health Visitors.

The complete Scheme for Health-at-Home Training and Teaching is as follows :—

I. A Rural Medical Officer of Health is selected by the County Council for his fitness and experience.

II. Lectures are given to ladies desirous of becoming Health Visitors, and others, by the Rural Medical Officer of Health (for Syllabus of Lectures see page 28). This course of about fifteen lectures (not less) includes Elementary Physiology, *i.e.*, an explanation of the uses and actions of all the organs of the body, how each affects the health of the body, and how each can be kept in order. These lectures are a summary of the Science of Hygiene, and are to give the scientific basis on which the popular familiar village teaching is to be founded. These preliminary lectures may be given to a mixed audience, including all those ladies who are anxious to understand and help on the work in the neighbourhood without themselves becoming teachers. The travelling expenses of ladies qualifying themselves to become teachers have been paid by the County Council.

III. A class is given after the lecture to those only who wish to qualify themselves as Health Visitors. They are required to write papers at home on subjects given by the lecturer, who, by questions and by the written work, tests the knowledge, character, and power of expression of the candidates. The questions must be so framed as to make the pupils observe for themselves; the attendance at lectures and classes will be taken into account when candidates are to be chosen for the final examination.

IV. Instruction is given to the ladies attending the classes by the Medical Officer, taking two or three at a time, or sometimes all together, into the villages, showing them what to observe and how to visit. This can best be done by a Rural Medical Officer of Health, already well known to the poor as their friend ; who is familiar with the evils to be fought against, and the remedies to be suggested.

V. The Medical Officer of Health recommends for examination a certain number of ladies who have attended his lectures and classes as suited to become Health Visitors. These qualifications are : (1) Good character ; (2) good health ; (3) personal fitness of the candidate for teaching and making herself acceptable to the village mothers ; (4) belief in, and enthusiasm for the work.

VI. The County Council appoints an independent examiner, who must himself be familiar with the conditions of rural and village life, who will test the knowledge of candidates and their power of imparting it.

VII. A report is sent in to the County Council by the Medical Officer of Health and by the examiner (see pages 24-27) of the candidates who have satisfied them both. The County Council then appoints as many ladies as Health Visitors as are required for their district. The scheme so far comprises :—

- (a) Lectures given to large audiences of ladies (from seventy to ninety) in order to diffuse knowledge about Health at Home.
- (b) Classes given (in addition to the lectures) to and papers written by ladies wishing to become Health Visitors.
- (c) The best of the candidates presented for examination by the Medical Officer.
- (d) The best of those examined, recommended to the County Council for employment.

These are, roughly speaking, the figures as the scheme has been carried out in North Bucks; of these six ladies duly qualified, three were at once engaged by the County Council, the other three will be employed as the work is extended.

VIII. The Health Visitors are appointed to districts. A district consists of a number of small villages, grouped with a larger village or market town. Where it is possible a District Committee should be formed, with representatives from the various villages in the District, to carry out details of arrangements for Health Visitors.

The Village Committee sends in to the District Committee requests for Health Lectures, and makes the necessary arrangements for receiving the Health Visitor, by engaging a room, providing a blackboard, &c., and making the lectures known to every wife and mother in the village.

IX. The Health Visitor when at work is under the supervision and control of the Medical Officer of Health; who, when possible, introduces her to her audience the first time she visits a village, receives her daily returns (pages 52-55) and her Diaries, and makes it his business to inquire into the practical success of the work, or the reverse.

X. The Health Visitor delivers simple lectures in homely language, and aims at making friends with the women and visiting them, by invitation, in their own homes. Here the teaching can best be given, the function of the Lectures being to lay down principles and give the outline of the teaching to be practically exemplified in the homes.

XI. A Health Visitor should remain in a District until she has gained experience in the work, and a personal knowledge of the women, by visits in the villages; she would then be able to receive a Probationer.

A Probationer attending a course of Lectures and Classes, would be required to accompany an experienced Health Visitor

on her round of lecturing and visiting, as the time necessary for her own work allowed of it.

[N.B.—It should be remembered that this “Summary of a Scheme” was written twenty years ago. If re-written now, several modifications would have to be introduced to meet changes in sanitary administration, specially having regard to the appointment of County Medical Officers of Health, now made compulsory for every county.]

The following letter from Miss Nightingale was received just in time to serve as a conclusion to this pamphlet.

LONDON, Nov. 21, 1892.

HEALTH-AT-HOME VISITORS.

MY DEAR MR. FREDERICK VERNEY,—

Though I have recently left Claydon, it was not till after I had had the advantage of much information through Dr. De'Ath, of strict, independent inquiries, and of personal communication with the three ladies at present at work, as regards the Health-at-Home work.

The result for the short time is more satisfactory than you could have dared to hope. The Technical Education Committee may be quite confident that good work is being done.

But an extension of time, your Committee will readily see, is most desirable.

The term of the present employment of the Health Visitors is already drawing to a close. And this just as they are beginning to gain the confidence of the cottage mothers and girls. If we consider how many sceptics there still are, even among those who are called educated, as to the vital necessity of sanitation, and the almost immediate saving effect of some sanitary measures, we must not be surprised that those less educated whom we have to deal with do not understand or assimilate these new ideas at once. It requires the continued work of a friend, not a *mere* lecturer.

The friendly visiting of the Health Visitor at the Cottage Homes, *by invitation*, has been a marked success. It has also been found by experience that all the practical teaching which it was intended that these ladies should give could not be compressed into the number of lectures, so as to receive the illustrations and definitions by anecdote absolutely necessary—an additional reason why lectures, which have been in most places well attended, should receive an extension, which it is hoped the

County Council, under whose auspices this experiment has been so happily begun, would willingly approve.

Your Technical Education Committee would, in their intelligence, see that *rural* training must be given in rural health to rural cottage women, and that London Physiological Lecturers, in Cottage Health-at-Home visiting, are worth little or nothing for rural life. Its conditions, it need hardly be said, are so different from those of large towns.

I trust I shall be forgiven by your Technical Committee if I appear intrusive—forgiven on account of my deep interest in the instruction to rural poor women, for whom so little has yet been done, so wisely set on foot by the Bucks County Council.

“May their shadow never be less.”

Pray believe me the humble and anxious friend, dear Mr. Frederick Verney, of yourselves and your Bucks Cottage Mothers.

(*Signed*) FLORENCE NIGHTINGALE.

Medical Examination of Schools and Scholars

EDITED BY

T. N. KELYNACK, M.D.

*Member of the Royal College of Physicians of London; Fellow of the Royal
Society of Medicine; Medical Adviser to the National Children's
Home and Orphanage, &c., &c.*

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LEAGUE FOR PHYSICAL EDUCATION & IMPROVEMENT,

AND OF ITS FIRST

CONFERENCE OF HEALTH- PROMOTING INSTITUTIONS

*Held at the GUILDHALL, LONDON, E.C., on
Thursday & Friday, 8th and 9th December, 1910*

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